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SANITARY ADVICE FOR SUMMER TOURISTS.

By W. C. RUCKER, Assistant Surgeon General, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

With the advent of warm weather and the consequent closing of schools comes the thought of leaving the city for the cool country. The tired teacher and the over-worked clerk, the restive school boy, anxious to leave his books for the great out of doors, the society matron, bored by the constant round of social duties, all long to get away from the city and to spend the summer in some shady rural retreat. Too frequently the realization of this happy anticipation is a hasty return to the city and a long stay in the hospital, to be followed, perhaps, by the death of some loved one. Much of this may be avoided if reasonable care is exercised in the choice of the place to spend the summer.

Ordinarily the questions which are asked when one is seeking for such a place include the character of the food and beds, the extent and nature of the social life, the temperature of the air, and the opportunities for bathing. All of these are important, but they are of secondary consideration as compared with the question of the healthfulness of the locality in which it is intended to spend the warm months. Therefore, in choosing a summer residence the first thing to have in mind is the sanitary environment in which this time is to be spent.

Every autumn there is a rise in the number of typhoid cases in the cities, and when this is investigated it is frequently found that they are simply cases which have been imported from the country. Persons have left the city in search of health, and, as they are accustomed to think that health may be obtained and maintained best in the country, they accept it without question as the place to get health.

Typhoid fever is a disease which summer tourists frequently contract; therefore it is always well to bear the avoidance of this disease in mind in choosing a summer residence. Typhoid fever is a disease of man. The germ which causes it leaves the body of the person sick with the disease in his discharges, and when these are taken by a well person a secondary case of the disease is caused. The germs of typhoid fever are carried from the sick to the well in water and food and by flies and the fingers. If one does not take into his system the discharges of another person having typhoid fever he does not get typhoid fever. At the present time typhoid fever is essentially a disease of the country, because in the country the opportunities for the transference of the germs of the disease from the sick to the well are greater than they are in the city. Therefore in the choice of a place to spend the summer one should inquire into the occurrence of typhoid fever in the community in which it is intended to stay, and one should determine the opportunities which exist there for the carrying of the germs of typhoid fever from the sick to the well visitor.

Since the germ is carried in the discharges of persons sick with typhoid fever, a careful inspection should be made of the facilities for disposing of human excrement. A place which has a surface privy to which the domestic animals and fowls have free access should not be chosen. Places which have a pit privy or a cesspool situated only a short distance from a well should be avoided. Places which take their drinking water from streams which receive the drainage of outhouses

or from buildings should likewise be regarded with suspicion. Other things being equal, places having a water supply from artesian or deep-driven wells should be given the preference. Unscreened toilets, because of the flies which they breed, and because of the chance which these insects have to pick up the germs of typhoid fever therein and carry them to the boarder's food, are particularly dangerous. It is equally important, both for the comfort and the health of the guest, that the house also be screened.

It has been shown in the foregoing paragraphs how the fly may carry the germs of typhoid fever from the toilet to the kitchen and there infect the food which people eat. There is another way in which it may infect food, and this is particularly important from the standpoint of the child. The source of the milk supply should always be investigated in choosing a place of summer residence, and if it is found, as is too frequently the case, to be from dirty, fly-infested stables, in which dirty cows are milked by dirty hands, it is best to give the place a wide berth.

Another insect to be avoided is the mosquito. It used to be thought that malaria was caused by night air, but nowadays it is known that the only bad thing about night air is the mosquito which it contains. This insect infects people with malaria by biting them and injecting the germ as it bites. Therefore when a place of summer residence is chosen it should not be an unscreened house, nor should it be in a swampy region, nor in a locality in which there are small pools of water well adapted to the breeding of mosquitoes.

Finally, if there is any doubt in the mind of the summer tourist let him consult the local health officer of the locality under consideration.

REPORT ON AN OUTBREAK OF TYPHOID FEVER AT LINCOLN, NEBR., IN 1911.

By L. L. Lumsden, Passed Assistant Surgeon, Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

On the request of the governor of Nebraska the writer was detailed by the Surgeon General of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service to proceed to Lincoln, Nebr., and to make an investigation of an outbreak of typhoid fever in that city, with a view to determining the sources of the infection and the measures necessary for the control of the disease.

The investigation was begun on November 4 and terminated on November 17, 1911. It comprised an epidemiological study of cases reported from July 1 to November 1, a sanitary survey of the city and its immediate environs, bacteriological examinations of the water supply, and inspections of dairies and other places where foods were sold or prepared for sale.

In conducting the investigation the writer had the active cooperation of Dr. H. W. Waite, professor of bacteriology and pathology in the University of Nebraska, who was engaged by the city council to assist in the investigation; the city health officer; the city engineer; and the water commissioner. The bacteriological examinations were made in the bacteriological laboratory of the University of Nebraska. The media used in the examination of the water supply were prepared with especial care by Mr. John J. Putnam, technical assistant in the laboratory.